

Planning Collaboration Initiative Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration

Conference Call Summary for April 2, 2003

Topic: Congestion Management Systems (CMS) and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

The first round of conference calls for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Planning Collaboration Initiative (PCI) continued on April 2, 2003 with a discussion of Congestion Management Systems (CMS) and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). This was the seventh of 8 conference calls (recently reduced from 15 conference calls) to discuss the drafting of a National Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between FHWA and FTA. Robin Mayhew of FHWA Headquarters and Vince Valdes of FTA Headquarters facilitated the discussion, and Jesse Balleza of FTA Region 6 and Peter Butler of FTA Region 1 represented the PCI Team on the conference call. Charlie Goodman of FTA Headquarters also participated. The Volpe Center was represented by Kate Fichter.

Representatives from the following field offices participated in this seventh call:

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|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| ◆ FTA Region 1 | ◆ FHWA Illinois Division |
| ◆ FTA Region 4 | ◆ FHWA Oklahoma Division |
| ◆ FTA Region 5 | ◆ FHWA Pennsylvania Division |
| ◆ FTA Region 9 | ◆ FHWA Tennessee Division |
| ◆ FTA Region 8 | ◆ FHWA Midwestern Resource Center |
| ◆ FTA Region 10 | ◆ Chicago Metro Office |

This summary captures discussion and recommendations from the conference call on the following matters: (1) the PCI outreach process (2) the limited resources available to FTA staff for the planning and implementation of CMS and ITS technologies, (3) coordination and communication between FHWA and FTA on the development of CMS and ITS strategies, and (4) a synopsis of all recommendations offered for improved collaboration on CMS and ITS. This summary also includes a list of other issues that arose during the conference call and should be addressed, but were not immediately relevant to the discussion of collaboration on the deployment of CMS and ITS (see *Parking Lot/Bus Stop* issues).

OVERALL COMMENTS ABOUT THE PCI OUTREACH PROCESS

The participants made no comments about the PCI outreach process during this call.

COMMENTS ABOUT COLLABORATION FOR THE DEPLOYMENT OF CMS AND ITS

The conference call participants discussed the role of collaboration in the planning and implementation of CMS and ITS strategies. ITS and CMS offer solutions to the problems of congestion, among them the problems of degraded air quality and inefficient transportation operations. As CMS and ITS have traditionally been associated more with highway operations than with public transit operations, FHWA has typically been more active in these areas than has FTA. The call participants unanimously agreed that FHWA generally takes the lead role in

working with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and state Departments of Transportation (DOTs) to develop and implement congestion management strategies. Nevertheless, public transit is an increasingly important element in the congestion management equation, and participants discussed two primary issue areas relating to FHWA-FTA collaboration on this issue:

- A. Limited Staff Resources
- B. Coordination and Communication

A. Limited Staff Resources

FHWA Division Offices often have staff engineers and other resources dedicated to working on the development of local and regional congestion management technologies, but FTA Regional Offices rarely have similar in-house expertise. As such, FTA often looks to FHWA for appropriate support on issues of ITS and CMS. As ITS and CMS technologies are now expanding into the realm of public transit, the conference call participants discussed the growing importance of greater involvement by FTA in the planning and implementation of ITS and CMS. The participants emphasized that the challenge of limited FTA staff resources and expertise is a significant one, and that any responsibilities for CMS and ITS should not add significantly to the workload of the staff in the FTA Regional Offices.

There were no examples offered during the conference call of successful practices used to manage the limited staff resources of FTA on the planning and implementation of CMS and ITS.

The following recommendations for managing limited FTA staff resources were made to the PCI Team:

- Encourage the addition of ITS engineers to the staffs of the FTA Regional Offices.
- Incorporate a review of ITS and CMS strategies into the triennial TMA certification review, as a means to involve FTA in congestion management issues without adding additional review and oversight responsibilities.

B. Coordination and Communication

Coordination and communication between FHWA and FTA on the topics of CMS and ITS are important for the development of congestion management strategies to be effective and efficient. With FHWA typically taking the lead on CMS and ITS issues, call participants indicated that both agencies are looking for ways to better coordinate and better incorporate public transit in discussions of congestion management.

The following is a list of examples, offered during the conference call, of successful practices used for coordination and communication between FHWA and FTA on CMS and ITS:

1. Region 5 has held ITS-oriented scan tours for local, state, and Federal officials (both highway and public transit officials) to learn more about successful congestion management practices.
2. The Texas and Oklahoma Division Offices both coordinate closely with the Region 6 Office on their TMA certification review processes, which include issues of congestion

management. Although there is no formal document of understanding between the offices on this matter, the relationships have been successful and productive.

3. In Region 10, FHWA and FTA participate in joint training programs on CMS.

The following recommendations for improving coordination and communication on issues of CMS and ITS were made to the PCI Team:

- Consider having FHWA become the executive agency on all CMS and ITS issues, with FTA playing a supportive, advisory/review function.
- Encourage FTA to review the congestion management proposals prepared by MPOs (generally only reviewed by FHWA).
- Support the concept of multi-modal planning for congestion management, in which the operations of the highway and public transit networks are considered together.
- Encourage FHWA and FTA to work together to develop collaborative agreements for the planning and deployment of regional ITS architecture in time for the April 2005 deadline.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following list restates the recommendations on the topic of collaboration on CMS and ITS planning and deployment:

- Encourage the addition of ITS engineers to the staffs of the FTA Regional Offices.
- Incorporate a review of ITS and CMS strategies into the triennial TMA certification review, as a means to involve FTA in congestion issues without adding additional review and oversight responsibilities.
- Consider having FHWA become the executive agency on all CMS and ITS issues, with FTA playing a supportive, advisory/review function.
- Encourage FTA to review the congestion management proposals prepared by MPOs (generally only reviewed by FHWA).
- Support the concept of multi-modal planning for congestion management, in which the operations of the highway and public transit networks are considered together.
- Encourage FHWA and FTA to work together to develop collaborative agreements for the planning and deployment of regional ITS architecture in time for the April 2005 deadline.

PARKING LOT/BUS STOP QUESTIONS

The following questions arose during the conference call and should be addressed, but were not immediately relevant to the discussion of collaboration on CMS and ITS:

- ◆ The challenge of encouraging public transit operators to become involved with the development of local and regional congestion management policies and systems. What is the role of FTA and the FTA grant-making process?
- ◆ How can FTA assist small and rural transit operators in understanding the importance of congestion management?
- ◆ How can FHWA and FTA work together to develop joint procedures to meet the 2005 deadline for the deployment of a national ITS architecture?

- ◆ How to encourage MPOs and state DOTs to approach congestion management from a regional, multi-modal perspective?
- ◆ How to measure the success of multi-modal planning?